

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE, DELFT UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

Academic Year 2021—22
December 2021

INTRODUCTION

Under the auspices of the Graduate School of the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment (Delft University of Technology), the Department of Architecture invites PhD dissertation proposals to help expand its doctoral portfolio. We invite all interested academic and/or professional candidates who are qualified to pursue PhD-level research work aligned with the Department's research agenda.

The research program of the Department consists of 10 Research Lines, and offers a rich and challenging environment that provides rewarding research experience. The Department's research program is guided by a diverse group of critically acclaimed scholars, leading professional academics and internationally acknowledged architects (involved as professors of (design) practice). The research program facilitates in-depth, independent research work that relates to the major themes of the research portfolio as well as to its educational activities.

For the new round of PhD candidacies, the Department will accept and consider proposals that will contribute to its existing research portfolio, based on three specific and pre-defined topics and two more general research lines. The successful candidates will be expected to contribute innovative, leading-edge research work to the Department of Architecture and its research portfolio.

THE 'X AGENDAS FOR ARCHITECTURE' RESEARCH PROGRAM

Under the heading 'X Agendas for Architecture', the Department of Architecture's research program consists of 10 Research Lines, which are: 'Architecture and the City'; 'Borders & Territories'; 'Situated Architecture'; 'Global Housing'; 'Architecture, Culture and Modernity'; 'Digital Culture'; 'Ecologies of Architecture'; 'History'; 'Architectural Pedagogies' and 'Design Research'. The research carried out by the Department of Architecture distinguishes itself by a focus on architecture as a *cultural field of expertise*, a field in which making and thinking are inextricably linked. The research programme regards the architectural project as the junction where a complex combination of cultural, social, artistic, material, functional, economic and ecological factors is articulated as a concrete spatial proposal. The research groups within the program can be distinguished by their focus on a *particular aspect of architectural expertise* that is relevant in addressing contemporary scientific and societal questions, involving both theory and practice.

PHD PROJECTS

For this round of the Open Call for PhD Proposals, the Department has outlined three research topics and offers an open call for two of its research lines, each constituting a set of potential contributions to its research portfolio.

PhD Trajectory #01,

The Axiology of Architecture: rules, norms and architectural values

This PhD position is related to the Architecture of Value and the derivative value of architecture. The axiological relations are in dire need of production, exploration, investigation, testing and experimenting with. The effective value of research is to be located in such probing. Specifically, research proposals should address some of the following issues: (1) Architectural ethics beyond binary oppositions, modes of judgment and moralistic (transcendental) presuppositions; (2) The role of affect in the production and consumption of architecture; (3) The importance of enabling constraints in the emergence of architectural values; (4) The co-constitutive relation between architectural norms, rules and values as an (immanent) autocatalytic process.

The source of any normativity must not come from the outside. Rule-bonding needs to operate at its own terms. In other words, Truth and Falsity are not values that exist outside the constitutive problematic fields that give them sense. Ethics, framed in this way, is a problem of *power* and not duty. The change of attitude is best exemplified by the term ‘response-ability’ as in the capacity to respond. In contrast to the (liberal individual) *moralising* notion of responsibility, Donna Haraway’s neologism is fully relational, i.e. *ethical*. The law does not exist as an external and transcendent *moral* (absolute) imperative that would be possible for anyone to follow or transgress. If there is a law, it unwittingly regulates real behaviours.

The Affective Turn has rendered some traditional issues obsolete but introduced new ones, most notably those concerning the source of normativity. Unlike previous social formations, capitalism is incapable of providing a code that will apply to the *whole* of the social field. When pondering the issue of whether there can be a material ethics, one has to acknowledge that the source of critique cannot come by way of a transcendental intrusion. It needs to operate at the level of production. The conditions of critique and creation collapse so as to debunk the genesis of thinking in thought itself. Thus, the question is not how architectural criticism serves architecture, but how architecture itself becomes a medium for critical activity.

The PhD candidate will be supervised by dr. Marc Schoonderbeek, dr. Andrej Radman and dr. Stavros Kousoulas.



PhD Trajectory #02,

European Transitions in Architecture and Digital Culture: from Open Society to Open Data.

This PhD project looks upon the European history of digital culture and reflect on the political, cultural and social conditions of today's data society from an architecture and media history perspective.

After the wave of cyberneticisation occurred in the middle of the 20th century, the utopian playfulness of the 1960s was followed by more application-driven thinking of the emerging post-industrial society. Emancipatory technologies shifted into the design of buildings, infrastructures, standards, and services. The 1970s, therefore, are seen as a transitional period, after the cybernetic age and before early debates on artificial intelligence and surveillance in the late 1980s. Modern forms of society emerged that could be described as data-driven economies. Digital infrastructures expanded into culture, industry, and economy, alongside the miniaturisation and capitalisation of information technology, and transformed design processes in architecture and urban planning. The PhD research project aims to explore the mutual transformations of architecture and digital culture against the background of Cold War geopolitics, welfare state arrangements between government and market, and the materialisation of the increasing data society in Western Europe, such as university campuses, company research centres, banks, postal and media facilities, and statistical institutions.

The PhD research project will be connected to the Jaap Bakema Study Centre and the National Collection for Dutch Architecture and Urban Planning at Het Nieuwe Instituut, Museum for Architecture, Design and Digital Culture in Rotterdam.

The PhD candidate will be supervised by prof. dr. Georg Vrachliotis and dr. Dirk van den Heuvel.



PhD Trajectory #03,

Water, Ports and Historic Cities

At a time of climate change and shifting water patterns, we need to take a critical look at building with water (SDG6), notably in relation to sustainable buildings, cities and communities (SDG11). Over centuries, architects and builders have designed diverse structures to respond to local water threats and opportunities. They have inserted water works into cities and landscapes. Today, numerous heritage sites stand as examples of the ingenuity of builders to respond to water challenges and opportunities over time. We can learn from these historical spaces and institutions to rethink today's practices. We also need to protect these and other historical sites so that they can inspire future generations. Integral methods, such as the UNESCO Historic Urban Landscape approach (HUL) can facilitate the preservation and sustainable development of water heritage in cities and landscapes around the world.

To learn from historical water practices and address the derived knowledge systematically, we should think of water practice as an integrated system both in space and in time. The inherited structures and activities have evolved from the past to the present and compose the system that manifests how people have lived with water for millennia. Among the list of UNESCO world heritage sites recognized by the World Heritage Centre there are many cultural sites or mixed sites as well as practices belonging to or interlinked with water systems, including the historic city of Yazd in Iran, the canals in Venice, or the sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution. Exploring water-related UNESCO World heritage sites as a part of larger histories and narratives can help develop a shared

vocabulary and shape approaches on which the sustainable development of water cities will be founded. This PhD project builds on activities led by Carola Hein under the auspices of the newly established *UNESCO Chair Water, Ports, and Historic Cities* and the LDE *PortCityFutures* research group. The PhD research will focus on developing a methodology as a first step towards a shared and comprehensive understanding of networked water heritage. The PhD project will apply and refine the six step UNESCO Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approach on select water cities (ideally from different continents). Starting from GIS-based socio-spatial mapping, the PhD project will assess water values in relation to the built environment. The goal is to engage with decision makers in the cities through workshops/living labs, and to compare the results. The project builds upon ongoing initiatives connecting water and heritage including the TU Delft open access education course *Water Works*.

The PhD candidate will be supervised by prof. dr. Carola Hein and dr. Rachel Lee.



PhD Research line #01,

New Urban Configurations for Climate Change.

The research group *Architecture and the City* is calling for PhD proposals addressing the interplay between Urban Transformations and Climate Crisis, with specific focus on Architectural Design.

There is little doubt that the relationship between climate change, environmental decline and the built environment is an urgent issue to tackle. Working towards urban spaces responsive to present and future climate challenges is linked to architectural interventions among others. However, knowledge in this field is often fragmented into specialized domains, usually leaving to architectural design the task of pursuing the synthesis. The lack of a coherent body of knowledge that connects these specialized domains with the pertaining socio-spatial challenges greatly affects the ability of accomplishing robust urban configurations that are responsive to the raising climate challenges. The steadily growing dense, compact metropolises are particularly in the focus of climate challenges (e.g. the urban heat island effect; flooding of coastal urban areas and along rivers; heavy rainwater management) posing new questions to architectural design. Future urban configurations need to be climate-resilient and climate-proactive, as well meeting relevant social, spatial and ethical needs that keep emerging in the local and global contexts.

Considering the A&C research objectives and collaborations with other disciplines at the Faculty of A+BE and with national and international institutions, this PhD call aims to build a strong body of coherent knowledge on the relationships among urban transformations, architectural design and climate change, integrating specialized responses with particular reference to:

- 1) Practice: Roles and methods of the architectural practice and design in addressing territorial, urban, and building contexts in complex collaborations with stakeholders.
- 2) Urban structures: urban configurations enabled by new urban infrastructures or by the modification of existing ones in response to climate challenges.
- 3) Objects: the design of 'smart' configurations for tackling climate change at building level, including climate-aware program combinations and urban alliances / synergies.
- 4) Context: climate-related urban challenges for the cities and the territories of the Randstad, for setting the agenda for appropriate design strategies.

PhD research proposals should be open to multi-disciplinary contributions, possibly involving synergies with relevant disciplines inside and outside of the Building

Sciences, making use and reinforcing the collaborative efforts of the A&C research group. The proposals should address an integrated understanding of the relationships between climate change and (new) urban configurations, putting forward the realm of architectural design.

Promotors: dr. Roberto Cavallo, prof. Kees Kaan, prof. Nathalie de Vries.



PhD Line #02,

The **Situated Architecture** Research Line is based on the premise that architecture appears within contexts and situations that it has the opportunity and obligation to make visible. As a consequence, we understand the experience of architecture as bound to its conditions, which it both articulates and produces. The experience of architecture is therefore a complex matter to do with—all at once—phenomena, material culture, politics, and language.

We research contexts rather than context and understand place as both noun and verb. Our concerns are deeply embedded in the ways and means by which architecture delineates the nature of human relationships and responds to environments, invoking subjects, that form, inform or are formed by conditions.

Three aspects form the key topics of inquiry of the Situated Architecture Research Line:

1. Experiencing and Perception of Place
2. Narrating, Language and Representation
3. Making and Material Culture.

Within the scope of Situated Architecture, we are looking for original and innovative doctoral proposals, investigating how the situations, which define or are defined by architecture, can be experienced, communicated, and built. We welcome proposals which elucidate the many forms of language through which architecture is described, reflected upon and embedded within wider cultural experience; which analyse the complex, layered contexts that ground architecture, exploring their impact on both its physical and spatial manifestations and its subsequent experience and use; and which engage with the ways and means by which architecture is materialised and made manifest, in terms of both process and production.

Promotors: prof. dr. Klaske Havik, prof. Daniel Rosbottom, prof. Paul Vermeulen.

GENERAL INFORMATION PhD RESEARCH PROJECTS

All selected PhD candidates will conduct scholarly research and other related activities. The candidates will be fully integrated into the Department of Architecture's research staff, working closely with the respective members of the Research Lines. Each research group will provide a collaborative platform for gaining extensive experience and skills for independent research work.

The successful candidates must be able to:

- 1) situate the dissertation within the Department of Architecture's research interests;
- 2) illustrate clearly the hypothesis and the theoretical framework the dissertation seeks to explicate;

- 3) demonstrate the proposed dissertation's value and contribution to the existing discourse;
- 4) elaborate on the ambition of the research work.

The PhD track will commence with academic hospitality for an 18 months period, with a Go No Go review after 12 months. The review panel (consisting of both external and internal jurors) will evaluate the research work for its scientific quality and will evaluate the development of the candidate. When both aspects are deemed satisfactory, the track will be extended for an additional period of 2,5 years. We expect completion of a PhD thesis in approximately four years in total. The Department of Architecture will appoint the promoter, co-promoter as well as daily supervisor (as indicated in this brief). Please note that TU Delft does not provide financial support and that the candidate has to demonstrate the availability of funding to sustain her/himself during the PhD research. However, the Department of Architecture, in cooperation with the faculty's Graduate School and Valorisation Centre, will fully and actively support applications of accepted candidates with respect to external funding.

All specific conditions will be determined according to the TU Delft's Doctorate Regulations and the Graduate School rules, to be found on: <https://www.tudelft.nl/en/architecture-and-the-built-environment/research/graduate-school-a-be>

Additional Graduate School requirements are described online:

<https://www.tudelft.nl/en/education/programmes/phd/fees-and-funding/>

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Cover letter (one A4 or US Letter page)

The applicant should elaborate on the personal motivations, interests, and aspirations behind pursuing a PhD degree and describe the qualifications. The applicant should explicitly argue how the proposal is closely aligned with the Department's research interests. Specify the area of focus and elaborate on how the applicant's research proposal pertains to this area.

Full CV

The CV should contain comprehensive chronological information on your academic and professional experience, as well as any pertinent record of publication. (Do not include any information prior to the first year of your university-level education.)

The CV should also include the names and contact information of three referents or recommenders. Also mention in which capacity they are familiar with your qualifications and capabilities (e.g. teacher, employer, colleague, etc.). Do not enclose any letters of reference or recommendation in the proposal package. We will contact your referents/recommenders directly.

Research Précis

The précis should include the following:

I. **Provisional Title:** this should form a general introduction to the project, framing it conceptually and/or thematically.

II. **Abstract:** Short summary (300-500 words), including keywords.

III. **Question(s)/Hypothesis, Aims and Goals:** Clearly and succinctly spell out the question(s) or hypothesis that drive your research and carefully articulate the aims and ambitions of your proposed study.

IV. **Preliminary outline:** describe the overall intended structure of the PhD research and explain how it will address your question(s)/hypothesis.

V. **Disciplinary Approach:** Introduce your research methodology and position it in its larger disciplinary (or cross/or inter/or trans-disciplinary) framework.

VI. **Research significance:** Explain why this research is relevant and original, and explain its overall contribution to the discourse of architecture. In addition, carefully position the proposed research within the framework of the B&T research program.

VII. **Preliminary Bibliography:** Distinguish primary and secondary literature.

VIII. **Addendum:** (e.g. letter of Motivation, portfolio-type information) This can include anything you find relevant to advancing a clear picture of yourself as a potential PhD candidate – an example might be a published text.

Document Length: The first draft research should be limited to +/- 2500 words (exclusive bibliography & addendum).

SUBMISSION SPECIFICATIONS

All the above-mentioned items must be consolidated in one PDF file of no more than 30 pages and 20 MB. Please name the PDF file as: *Lastname_keyword.pdf* (e.g. Smith_Neomodern.pdf).

SUBMISSION

The deadline for submission is 15 March 2022, 12PM.

QUESTIONS & PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

The Architecture Department's research secretary: Research-AR-BK@tudelft.nl

SELECTION PROCESS

The senior members of the research program and representatives of the departmental research council will first screen the proposals for qualification. After the initial screening, the reviewers will assemble a short list of candidates and invite them for a presentation. Based on the results, the involved research staff and a representative of the departmental research council will decide whether they will accept the selected candidate as a PhD or not. In certain cases, the Department of Architecture may ask the candidate to answer additional questions and revise the proposal for a follow-up meeting before a decision is made.

SCHEDULE

Invitation:	10 December 2021
Submission:	15 March 2022
Interview and Presentation:	April 2022
Notification of Acceptance:	1 May 2022
Start of Research Work:	September 2022 (subject to meeting our GS requirements)
Go/NoGo Review:	September 2023
Completion:	September 2026

WEB:

For further information on the Department of Architecture's research program:
<https://www.tudelft.nl/en/architecture-and-the-built-environment/research/research-at-bk-bouwkunde/architecture>

For further information about the GS's admission requirements:

<https://www.tudelft.nl/en/education/programmes/phd/phd-admission>

